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P R E F A C E.

HAVING now brought to a close the Second Volume of our little publication, we feel called upon to express our grateful acknowledgments to its numerous readers. As, however, they must through the year have perceived, that there is no one thing which we have less practised than *apologies* or *professions*, they will, we are assured, excuse our attempting either at the present moment. Of this we feel satisfied, that we have fully redeemed any pledge we tendered when entering on the arduous undertaking, of catering for the literary taste of a more numerous class of readers than was ever before attached to any periodical printed in Ireland.

At the time we took up the JOURNAL, there can be no question but that it had failed in the hands of two of the cleverest men in their line at present in Ireland—one, a writer of acknowledged abilities; the other, the first draughtsman and antiquarian in the country. That the JOURNAL has succeeded in our hands we at once readily admit is not owing to any superiority of talent in the management, but to our following out a plan which we had frequently suggested to those by whom the First Volume was conducted, namely, giving a greater variety of matter, more suited to the general class of readers, who might naturally be supposed to be the principal supporters of a publication of the kind.

We have now the satisfaction of stating that the Journal has, during the year, made such progress in public opinion, as to render its future publication a matter of certainty, and we feel assured it will be gratifying to our Irish readers to know that the sale of the JOURNAL is daily increasing, not only throughout this country, but even more so in England and Scotland.

We are well aware of the various objections which are made to our mode of management, but we feel that no individual can be so good a judge of what will suit the public taste, as the man who is daily watching the barometer of public opinion; and while one may think that we insert too many things connected with the antiquities of our country, others are at the same time of a directly contrary opinion—while some may imagine that the articles are not sufficiently scientific or useful, others, meantime, find fault with them as being too much above the comprehension of the great body of the people who purchase the JOURNAL. We, remembering the fable of “the man and his ass,” have endeavoured to keep the “even tenor of our way,” being anxious as far as practicable to mix the *utile et dulce*; and if we may judge by our success, we have still reason to think that the plan we are pursuing is the one best calculated for such a publication as the JOURNAL, in such a country as the one we live in. This much we can vouch for, that while our endeavours have been to instruct and amuse, we have never knowingly, in a single instance pandered to the evil passions of our nature, or inserted a line which could raise a blush on the cheek of modesty, or be calculated to injure the morals or affect the happiness of a single individual. We are well aware there was a track we could have pursued, in which we might have at once gained an ephemeral notoriety; but having pledged ourselves never to be personal, or to allow political or party motives to sway our conduct, nothing could tempt us to swerve from our engagement. So far we have succeeded; and without any promises or professions, we may now observe, it is our intention to pursue the same line of conduct, with this simple difference, that, having obtained the assistance of

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several kind friends, who devote much of their time to studies, the results of which are calculated to amuse and instruct, we hope to be able to give still greater variety than we have done, both in our Illustrations and the Articles with which they shall be accompanied. Of this the first Number of our Third Volume shall furnish ample demonstration.

We have now only to offer our best acknowledgments to our numerous contributors, and to none more heartily than to our kind friends Sir William Betham and T. L. Cooke, Esq. to whose valuable assistance we have been much indebted, in antiquarian and other researches, which we found it necessary to make in relation to several of the ancient buildings of which we have given sketches.

That the JOURNAL is eminently calculated to effect a great public benefit, and that not of a fleeting but a permanent character, has been very generally admitted; there can be no doubt, however, that its beneficial influence will be but little felt at the present time as compared with its extent hereafter, by exciting a national and harmonious feeling in a country in which there is, as yet, so much of discord and party, and by extending a taste for literature among a people to whom it has been but little known, except as connected with political and polemical discussions. At the same time we make no claim for the JOURNAL, on the mere ground of its being an Irish publication; we only ask the countenance and support of the public so long as it shall prove itself really deserving of public patronage.

Dublin, June, 1834.